

intended that the Church should have any property in the missions; that the Spanish government, in engaging the missionaries in this work, intended solely that they should convert and colonize the Indians, and, having accomplished these objects, the system of missions became spent, and the Indians, being now good, pious, and useful, were ready to become citizens. Hence the duty of the state was to come in and relieve the missionaries of their burdens, and the state accomplished this object in an effectual manner. Besides, the idea of the regular clergy holding curacies was wrong, the system of secular curacies being the normal one in the church. This was the theory of secularization. Another reason urged—and all governments have a number of “reasons” and excuses for confiscating church property—was that the friars, who were mostly Spaniards, were hostile to the newly-acquired “independence” and should be invited to go out of the country, leaving California fully colonized, with uniform and homogeneous institutions, united, prosperous, and contented.

In 1834, therefore, the decree of secularization was passed, and, following a forced construction put upon the laws of Spain providing for the establishment of the missions, it was determined to convert the religious communities into civil municipalities and place their property in the hands of civil administrators, appointing secular priests in place of the missionaries of the regular orders. As a natural consequence private individuals, taking advantage of the liberal offers of the “God and liberty” style of government organized in Mexico, began to petition for grants of grazing-lands which were located upon the well-stocked portions of the religious establishments. These petitions were readily acceded to by the government, and a systematic course of plundering pursued with such

success that in 1842, not quite eight years after the “civil administration” of the missions had begun, the latter were practically ruined, showing the following difference as the result of the “progress” of statesmanship:

	Religious administration. 1834.	Civil administration. 1842.
Indians.....	30,000	4,000
Horned cattle.....	400,000	28,000
Horses and mules.....	62,000	3,000
Sheep, etc.....	321,000	31,000
Grain.....	122,000	7,000

Even the counter-revolutionary governor, Micheltorena, who came from Mexico with an army, was dismayed at the ruin, and in his proclamation of March 29, 1834, recited that—

“The pious and charitable institutions of social order for the conversion of the savages to Catholicism, and to an agricultural and peaceful life, are reduced to the gardens and enclosures of the churches and buildings, . . . that the Indians, who are naturally lazy, now, from additional labor and scarcity of nourishment, being in a state of nudity, having no fixed employment or appointed mission, prefer to keep out of the way and die impenitent in desert woods, in order to escape a life of slavery filled with all privations and destitute of social enjoyment; . . . that there is no other way of *reanimating* the skeleton of a giant like the remains of the ancient missions except to fall back upon experience, and to fortify it with the appliances of civil and ecclesiastical power.”

This governor makes an attempt to restore the missions, but the evil has been done and the skeleton of the giant could not be reanimated. The immense benefits conferred upon the world by the civilization of an empire, considered from a purely worldly point of view, and independent of the spiritual benefits to the souls of the people, were utterly disregarded, and the same insane, unbusiness-like spirit which has possessed nations from the foundation of the world exhibited itself in destroying what had been intended for the world's benefit, and involving in ruin the civilization perfected by the church,